

BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER is located one mile north of I-70 on Hwy 7, one mile west on Park Road. The Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. **Area Hours: the area and trails are open 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. for Daylight Savings Time.** No pets allowed. There is no admission fee. The Nature Shop closes at 4:30 p.m. Phone: 816-228-3766

LEARN MORE ABOUT BURR OAK WOODS BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT:
WWW.BURROAKWOODS.ORG



The Nutshell
 BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER
 MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
 1401 NW PARK ROAD - BLUE SPRINGS, MO 64015


BURR OAK WOODS WISH LIST

Following is a list of items that the nature center needs for our programming with the public.

Children's PDF life jackets	Children's nature books
Flyfishing poles and reels	28-gal. storage bins w/ lids
Zebco 33 fishing reels	New Chainsaw
Lead-free weights & split shot	Commercial Vacuum

A BUNCH OF THANKS!

Many thanks to Edith Gronemeyer for her donation toward bird feeders and Joe Polka for the binoculars! We also wish to thank the following people for their help during our annual project work day:



Troy Epperson
 Jim Branham & Venture Crew 175
 Mark Rothmier and Cub Scout Den #8
 The Randy Beebe family
 Sarah Barnes and Karen McCroskey
 Charles and Jean Jones
 The Jennifer Dunklin family
 John Riggins and Troop #205
 The Craig Boltz family
 Bill Covey and Pack #320
 Jim DiHeart
 Amy Kelly and Troops 1771, 151 and 1698
 Glenn, Chris and Shawn Meader and all the Burr Oak Woods Staff and volunteers.

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The Nutshell

MAY 2003
 Volume 17
 Number 5

Newsletter of Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center

Celebrate Spring at Burr Oak Woods

1st Annual International Migratory Bird Day Spring Bird Festival



Saturday, May 10 at 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
 Early morning bird walks at 7:00 and 8:00 a.m.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 10th and join Burr Oak Woods as we celebrate the world of birds! Our feathered friends will be in all their spring glory as we celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with a wide range of bird-focused activities for children, adults and families. We'll begin the day with two early morning bird walks, one at 7:00 a.m. for adults and a second at 8:00 a.m. for families, and we'll even provide binoculars. The day's festivities will kick off at 9:00 a.m. and include bird banding demonstrations where you'll meet live birds up close and personal. In addition, we'll have a variety of hands-on take home crafts and activities as well as additional demonstrations about the world of birds. We'll even have naturalist-led walks as well as an on-going bird art contest, with winners selected at the end of the day.

At one o'clock, we will welcome Missouri's own Ralph Duren to the stage in the auditorium for a special program on bird and other animal calls. Ralph, a long-time MDC staff member, has appeared on Johnny Carson and traveled throughout the country demonstrating his unique and special talent. Once he is done, we'll have our very own bird calling contest for kids of all ages, with prizes going to the the best of the bunch.

No MORE Trash!

Thursday, May 1st

Celebrate No MORE Trash Day!

Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center has a paper recycling bin located in the parking lot. Help do your part for the environment, pick up trash around your neighborhood! Come to the nature center and pick up a **FREE** No MORE Trash decal!

The first half of May brings the peak of spring songbird migration. More than 20 species of warblers pass through Missouri and Burr Oak Woods. These colorful little birds are just a few of the neo-tropical migrants, birds that nest in North America, but head to Central and South America each winter.

DID YOU KNOW?

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Ribbit and Roll!

Nature Music at the Woods!

Friday, June 20th at 7 p.m.

Relax and get back to nature with Emmy winner- songwriter Jan Syrigos (*Critter Rock!*). Join us for an evening and enjoy the tapestry of natural songs! Be sure to check June Nutshell newsletter for more details.

A GREAT FAMILY SUMMER EVENT!

Our mission is to bring people and nature together.



From the Treetops

It's that time of year again. Birds are singing, grass is greening, and baby bunnies are jumping around everywhere. It's also the time of year that folks are going to start 'rescuing' baby animals.

People see baby birds, with tufts of down poking through small feathers, hiding under bushes or sitting in the middle of their lawn and they're sure they've been abandoned. They chase baby bunnies around the yard and catch them and then bring them into the nature center sure they're too young to care for themselves. How long did they have to chase them?

What these good-intentioned folks don't know is that the parents of the babies are probably watching nearby, as their little ones are carried off. Fledgling birds are cared for on the ground for one to two weeks by their parents while they are developing their wing muscles and learning to fly. The number one killer of songbirds each year is housecats.

If you find baby birds with feathers, the best thing to do is leave it alone. If the bird doesn't have feathers, look around and see if you can find the nest. Most birds don't have a sense of smell (except for vultures) so don't worry about the parents rejecting the baby. Put the baby back in the nest. If you can't find the nest, put the baby in a container that has drainage holes (strawberry baskets work well) and put the container as high in the closest tree where you found the baby.

Mother rabbit only visits the nest at dawn and dusk to feed so she doesn't draw attention to the babies. If you think you've found a nest that has been abandoned, place some string or yarn across the nest in an 'X'. Then visit the nest again in 12 hours. Chances are that mama has slipped in, moved the grass and yarn aside, fed her babies, and then covered them back up, all before you could see her.

Most captured bunnies die of shock. We do not accept wild animals at Burr Oak Woods. Wild animals make very good parents, and the instinct to parent is very strong. Please let the wildlife do their jobs. They make much better parents than you, or we, ever could.

— LYNN YOUNGBLOOD
Nature Center Manager

Critter Corner



Bringing back the 'blue robins'!

by Sheri Medlock

Perhaps no other bird evokes written flights of fancy as the eastern bluebird. Described as the "bluebird of happiness" or "carrying the sky on its back," bluebirds have long enchanted even the most casual of birdwatchers. Found only in North America, settlers called them "blue robins" for their similarity to the American robin, a close relative. Along with the striking blue of the male's back and wings, bluebirds make a pleasant call described as "CherWee! CherWee!" or "Che che cheer." Add in their propensity to feed on many kinds of insects we deem as pests, including grasshoppers and crickets, and their willingness to live in specially designed nestboxes, and one can see why the bluebird is so popular.

However, in the 1920s there were grave concerns that the bluebird was disappearing. Through conservation efforts aimed primarily at the placement of nestboxes in proper habitats, bluebirds have made an astonishing comeback. However, bluebirds still face severe competition for nest sites from non-native European starlings and house sparrows, as well as predation by cats. Thus, while their future is much more secure, they can still use our help. Stop by the nature center and pick up MDC's *Bluebirds in Missouri* publication and find out what you can do for our state bird. In the meantime, look for these spectacular songbirds on your next visit to Burr Oak Woods.



Jim's

Fishing Tip



The first two weeks of May can be the best time to catch one of the finest eating fish Missouri has to offer- the crappie.

When they come to the banks of lakes and ponds to spawn, they may be in as little as 1-3 feet of water. Use small crappie jigs on a light rod or small minnows below a slender float to have some real fun! Do remember to always check the size limit for the lake you are fishing and have fun!

(Editor's Note: Volunteer Naturalist Jim Hawes will share fishing tips each month in "The Nutshell." Enjoy!)

—Jim

BURR OAK WOODS Conservation Nature Center

1401 NW Park Road
Blue Springs, Missouri 64015
PHONE 816-228-3766
FAX 655-2627

NATURE CENTER MANAGER
LYNN YOUNGBLOOD

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS SUPERVISOR
R. CRAIG HENSLEY

NATURALISTS
STEPHANIE ACERS
LISA LACOMBE
SHERI MEDLOCK
DIANE NEAL
ANNA-LISA TUCKER

CLERICAL
JUDY BOLLMANN
JOAN BLACKMON
LAUREN MCCARTHY
PAULETTE OZIAS

MAINTENANCE
WAYNE BASS
DAVID BILYEU
RACHEL BUTLER
ROBERT MAUPINS

NEWSLETTER LAYOUT/DESIGN
SHERI MEDLOCK

~ Naturalist Notebook ~



Migration Mania

By Stephanie Acers



This winter while many of us were being hit with below freezing temperatures, snow and ice storms, many of our spring and summer breeding birds were spending the winter in places like Central and South America. There they were foraging for insects or eating fruit and hanging out with exotic birds like parrots, macaws, and toucans. With the arrival of spring, these birds are now returning. But who are these birds and how did they get there?

We call the birds that travel to southern tropical countries for the winter **neotropical migrants**. These are birds that migrate to warmer, southern places in search of insects that they can no longer find in their northern nesting grounds. Some examples are the Scarlet tanager and Kentucky warbler which travel as far as South America for the winter, then return to Missouri in the spring to nest. Others such as the Nashville and Connecticut warblers will travel south in the winter and then fly to Canada for the spring and summer. WOW! That sounds like a long way, so how do they do it?

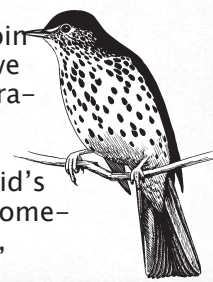
Most Missouri migrants follow the Mississippi flyway as the route to get to their winter homes. This is a broad section of land in central North America that stretches from the arctic coastal plains of Canada down to the southern coast of the United States. Using this route our birds and many others can head to the Gulf of Mexico and even as far as Central and South America. Scientists and birdwatchers get very excited because this route brings many birds through our area that we might not otherwise get to see. Around Burr Oak Woods from the end of April through the



end of May you can see anywhere from 10 to 20 different species of warblers on any given day. It is amazing to watch these tiny colorful birds bouncing from tree to tree. And don't forget about the number of vireos, thrushes, and flycatchers that you can watch as they build their nests and raise their young. There are also the many warblers and vireos that you can see as they are heading back to the northern reaches of their breeding grounds.

For some time now biologists have been noticing that some of these birds are decreasing in number. This decrease is due to loss of habitat and deforestation. The problem is not just in their wintering grounds but also along the flyway areas. Many organizations, including the Missouri Department of Conservation, recognize the problem and spend countless hours trying to preserve these lands and our migrating birds. In 1993 a special day was created to raise people's awareness and to celebrate the wonders of migration and these spectacular birds. This day is called International Migratory Bird Day.

Today it is organized by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's Division of Migratory Bird Management. International Migratory Bird Day is held annually on the second Saturday in May. This year across the United States people will celebrate this special event on May 10th with bird festivals, education programs, and other fun events. Join us here at Burr Oak Woods as we too celebrate International Migratory Bird Day and the wonders of migration with bird walks, special speakers, local artist, kid's crafts and more. We will have something for every age, experience, and interest.



Burr Oak Woods' Staff Profile

Lisa LaCombe



What do you like about working here?
I love to be able to share my passion for being outdoors with others.

Family:
Husband: Rick, married 23 years; 3 Daughters: Linda (23), Rachel (21), and Erica (15) and 2 Grandsons: Tucker (5), Desmond (1.5), and a new baby due in July!

How long have you been with the Missouri Department of Conservation?
3.5 years

Hobbies:
Canoeing, hiking, wildlife painting, scuba diving, caving, and coaching softball.

Other points of interests:
Attending Central Missouri State University for Masters of Science in Biology/Stream Ecology.

MAY EVENTS *at Burr Oak Woods*

Call Burr Oak Woods CNC on or after May 1 to register for these free programs (Phone 228-3766 V/TDD). If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list can attend.

3 Saturdays 17 Family Fishing

Set aside some time to enjoy Missouri's favorite pasttime, fishing! This is a jump-start program. We'll show you the "how's" and "where's", you put together "when." This program is sure to get you hooked! We provide the bait and equipment. Participants 16-65 years of age must have a valid Missouri fishing license which can be purchased at the Nature Center. Please call to register.
Time: 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Ages: 5 and up

3 Saturday Making Mother's Day Special

Attention fathers and kids! Join us as we make a special gift of the natural kind for Mom as a gift for her "special day." Be sure not to tell her, though, you don't want to ruin the surprise! Please call to register.
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Ages: 5 and up (with dad)



9 Friday Frog-mania!

Join us for an evening of amazing amphibian antics! From their dual life to their ability to use their eyes to help swallow food, frogs and toads will be our focus. You'll meet one up close and personal and head outdoors in search of them, as well. Please call to register.

Time: 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Ages: Families (children 6 and older)



11 Sunday In Search of Frogs and Toads:

Families with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Join Naturalist Sheri Medlock on a search of Burr Oak Wood's resident frogs and toads. If you're fast, you may be able to catch a few and observe them up close. Prepare to get muddy and wet! Please call to register.

Time: 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.
Ages: Families welcome

3 Saturday 6 Tuesday Birding 101

We'll cover Birding 101 with a look at vireos and warblers after first taking a walk along Tree Trail at the nature center. Our field trip will take us into "warbler alley" along Burr Oak Creek and the Bethany Falls trail area in search of the spring migrants and our resident breeding birds.

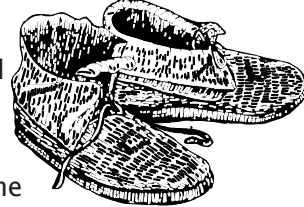
Times: Tuesday 6:30-9:00 p.m.
Saturday 7:00 - 10:00 a.m.
Ages: Adults (20 and up)



4 Sunday BOW Hiking Club

Join volunteer naturalists Marvin Roberts and Melissa Shudel for a wonderful afternoon of hiking at the Missouri River. We'll meet at the nature center at 1:00 p.m.

Time: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Ages: Adults (20 and up)



9 Fridays 23 Spring Bird Walks

Get your day off to a great start with an early morning stroll in search of our spring migrant and nesting songbirds. From warblers to hummingbirds, there is no telling what we'll encounter during the "high" season of migration.

Time: 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.
Ages: Adults (20 and up)

13 Tuesday Babes in the Woods **NEW!**

Hey babies, tell your moms and dads that Burr Oak Woods has a brand new program for you! Join us for an outdoor stroller adventure! Bring your stroller. Please call to register.
Time: 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.
Ages: birth to 2 years

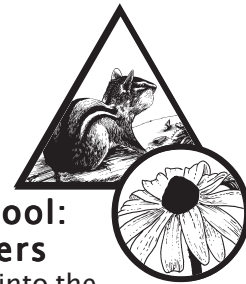


14 Wednesday 15 Thursday 31 Saturday Little Acorns and Homeschool: Shape Changers

Join us as we look into the world of the "shape changers." We will learn about animals that begin life looking completely different when they are grown up. We'll include a cool craft for your child to take home. Please call to register.



Time: Wednesday 10:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m.
Thursday 10:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m.
Saturday 10:00 a.m.
Ages: 3 - 6 years old



more! MAY EVENTS *at Burr Oak Woods*

15 Thursday Home School: Basic Bird ID

Join us for an introduction to the world of birds. Your children will learn about those things that make a bird a bird and head into the field in search of our winged wonders. Please call to register.

Time: 10:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m.
Ages: 7 and up

16 Friday Are You Wild for Pizza?

You don't want to miss this! Chef Frances Mathews has finally agreed to share her delicious wild edibles pizza recipe! We will create our culinary masterpiece, then head into the woods on a spring wild edibles hike. We will discover what tasty edibles are out at this time of year. We will then return to the Pizzeria and sample some of nature's bounty. Please call to register.

Time: 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Ages: Adults Only

17 Saturday Dr. Nutcase: The Power of Flight

What do bats, insects and birds all have in common? Flight, of course! Join Dr. Nutcase as we investigate just how these animals take charge of the air. Please call to register.

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Ages: 7 and up

19 Monday

Conservation Kids Club Camping 101

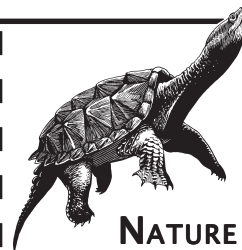
It's almost time for our annual Burr Oak Woods Take a Parent Camping Adventure! We'll use this evening to plan and prepare for the big event. Learn how to set up a tent, build a fire and cook a meal. We'll also work together to plan special activities for the whole group. Bring a friend! Please call to register.

Time: 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Ages: 7 - 10 years old



FISH & WILDLIFE FEEDING

The fish, turtles and amphibians are fed Wednesday, Friday and Sunday at 3:00 p.m. Snakes are fed every Friday at 3:30 p.m.



NATURE FILMS

Films are shown Saturdays & Sundays at 1:30 p.m.

May 3rd & 18th

Bugs Don't Bug Us

May 4th & 24th

Eyewitness Amphibians

May 11th & 31st

Webs of Intrigue

May 17th & 25th

Geo Kids



AUDIO WALKING TAPE

Perfect for a Spring hike! Be sure to check out Burr Oak Woods audio walking tape for the Habitat Trail. It is a great way to explore nature! Bring your walkman and check out this tape at the front desk! A five dollar refundable deposit is required.

25 Sunday Nature's Sketchbook

Being out in the field and sketching our natural world is the perfect way to study nature. Bring a sketchbook and your creative spirit! Please call to register.

Time: 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Ages: Adults (20 and up)

27 Tuesday Birding 101

We'll finish Birding 101 with a look at sparrows, grosbeaks, tanagers and blackbirds and a final bird hike along the Habitat Trail.

Times: Tuesday 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Saturday 7:00 - 10:00 a.m.
Ages: Adults (20 and up)



Bird Books and Sounds!

The Nature Shop has a great selection of Missouri's Bird books and Bird calls!



BE SURE TO CHECK THE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE PROGRAMS!

RIBBIT AND ROLL! NATURE MUSIC AT THE WOODS! FRIDAY, JUNE 20 AT 7 P.M.